(d) the details of the audit report of work done in Gujarat during the last two years; and

(e) the objections raised against organisations funded for the development of wasteland?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RURAL DEVELOPMENT (DR. (SHRIMATI) RITA VERMA): (a) The Department of Wastelands Development was created in July, 1992 under the Ministry of Rural Development. In April, 1999 it was renamed as Department of Land Resources and Land Reforms Division, Drought Prone Areas Programme (DPAP) and Desert Development Programme (DDPO) were brought within its purview.

(b) and (c) The Principal Director of Audit, Economic and Service Ministries, New Delhi have carried out the audit of the Department upto the financial year 1999*2000.

(d) The audit report pertaining to implementation of DPAP in Gujarat mainly pointed out that:

(a) In identified districts, funds were diverted to other schemes/activities not connected with the programme, and

(b) Funds were parked in Personal Ledger Account (PLA) with Treasury.

(e) Organisations where objections have been raised are Agro-Forestry Federation (AFF), Nasik and Army Foundation for Environment Conservation (AFEC). It was observed by the audit that AFEC had no past experience and AFF was not directly involved in wastelands development.

Extension of Food for Work Programme

1934. SHRI BHAGATRAM MANHAR:
SHRI RAJU PARMAR:

Will the Minister of RURAL DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether the attention of Government has been drawn to the news-item captioned "Food for Work Programme extended till

September", appearing in the Hindustan Times, New Delhi on 12th June, 2001;

(b) if so, whether the Food for Work Programme (FWP) is now linked to other schemes to benefit the poor and down-trodden; and

(c) if so, the complete detail thereof and what steps Government is planning to take for speedier distribution of foodgrains to the drought and earthquake affected people of Gujarat?

THE MINISTER OF RURAL DEVELOPMENT (SHRI M. VENKAIAH NAIDU): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir.

(c) The Food for Work Programme has now been made a general scheme and expanded so as to cover other natural calamities like flood, cyclone and earthquake. The Programme was earlier to have ended by 30th June, 2001 but has now been extended upto 30th September, 2001. Under the programme the Government of India are to make available appropriate quantity of foodgrains to each of the affected States as an additionality and free of cost with a view to enable the affected States to provide adequate wage employment opportunities to the needy rural poor. The States may make payment of wages partly in kind (upto 5kg foodgrains per man per day) and partly in cash. The eligibility criteria include both BPL and APL families. The State Govt, will be free to calculate the cost of the foodgrains paid in wages at either BPL or APL rate or anywhere between these rates. The workers will be paid balance of wages in cash so that they are assured the payment of minimum prescribed wages. The cash component of the wages and material cost are to be met from the scheme under which the Food for Work Programme is implemented. The cost of the transportation of foodgrains from FCI godown to the work-site/PDS and its distribution is the responsibility of the State Govts.

During the last and current year the total 1,48,105 MT of foodgrains has been released to Gujarat against which the State Govt, have lifted 88,806 tonnes foodgrains, so far. To ensure speedy distribution, additional quantity of foodgrains is recommended for release to the State Govt, only when 75% of the

previously allotted foodgrains is lifted and 60% of the lifted quantity is utilized/distributed.

Effect of Excise Duty on readymade garments

†1935. SHRI RAM JETHMALANI: Will the Minister of TEXTILES be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that after imposition of excise duty on readymade garments by Government, sickness is increasing in this industry.

(b) if so, whether it is also a fact that almost 58,000 small industries in readymade garment sector have become sick so far; and

(c) if not, the details available with Government in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF TEXTILES (SHRI V. DHANANJAY KUMAR): (a) No Sir.

(b) Docs not arise

(c) Consequent to introduction of 16% excise duty on readymade garments. Government have considered the grievances of the industry and taken a number of measures to address the concerns of the garment sector. The new measures include extension of SSI excise duty exemption to readymade garment sector. Clearances for home consumption upto Rs. 1 crore are exempted from excise duty. Units exporting substantial part of its production and whose clearance for home consumption docs not exceed the full exemption limit of Rs. 1

†Original notice of the Question was received in Hindi.